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Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 163445

FOLLOWING REPEAT ANKARA 5282 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
LONDON IAEA LONDON TEHRAN ISLAMABAD 8 JULY.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5282

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, TU
SUBJ: MULTINATIONAL NUCLEAR CENTERS: ASSESSMENT OF KEY ASIAN
COUNTRIES ATTITUDES TOWARD PLUTONIUM REPROCESSING

REF: STATE 154049

SUMMARY. TURKEY'S NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM IS STILL IN THE PLANNING STAGE, AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO ANTICIPATE THE DESIRE OF THE GOT TO OWN OR HAVE ACCESS TO REPROCESSING FACILITIES. TURKEY HAS, HOWEVER, ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN RECENT CENTO MEETINGS DISCUSSING THE ECONOMICS OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF PLANNING FUEL FABRICATION AND REPROCESSING FACILITIES TO SERVE THE ENTIRE CENTO REGION. END SUMMARY.

1. LONG-RANGE ENERGY PROJECTIONS OF GOT INCLUDE ESTABLISHMENT OF A 600-900 MW NUCLEAR POWER PLANT BY 1983. PROJECTIONS HAVE SLIPPED, HOWEVER, AND IT IS NOW CONSIDERED DOUBTFUL
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WHEATHER THIS PLANT CAN BE IN OPERATION BY 1985. TURKISH

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ELECTRIC AUTHORITY (TEK) HAS SELECTED THE SUISELECTRA GROUP (SWISS) TO PROVIDE ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE PROJECT. ALTHOUGH THE CONTRACT IS NOT YET SIGNED, ONE OF THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ENGINEERING GROUP SELECTED WILL BE TO COMPARE DIFFERENT METHODS OF POWER GENERATION TO DETERMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF THE USE OF A NATURAL URANIUM, HEAVY-WATER SYSTEM, SUCH AS CANDU, IN TURKEY.

2. ONE OF THE PRIME CONSIDERATIONS OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT IN ENERGY PLANNING PROJECTIONS HAS BEEN TO GIVE PRIORITY TO INDIGENOUS SOURCES OF SUPPLY. SINCE 1973 THE GOT HAS ATTEMPTED TO HOLD BACK THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW THERMAL UNITS DEPENDENT ON IMPORTED PETROLEUM AND HAS CONCENTRATED ON HYDRO AND LIGNITE-FIRED THERMAL UNITS, PARTICULARLY THE $1 BILLION, 1,200-MW ELBISTAN LIGNITE PROJECT.

3. SINCE GEOLOGICAL SURVEYS AND EXPLORATION CARRIED OUT IN THE KOPRUBASI (IZMIR) AREA OF WESTERN TURKEY INDICATE THE EXISTENCE OF URANIUM RESERVES ESTIMATED AT APPROXIMATELY 3,000 TONS U3O8 EQUIVALENT, THE GOT SEEMINGLY FEELS THAT THIS PROVIDES IT WITH THE POTENTIAL OPTION OF A CERTAIN DEGREE OF INDEPENDENCE IN THE NUCLEAR ENERGY FIELD AS WELL. RECENTLY THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HAS AGREED TO ASSIST THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF TURKEY (MTA), TOGETHER WITH THE TURKISH ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION AND ETIBANK (TURKISH STATE-ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE IN MINING AREA), IN PROSPECTING AND DEVELOPING THE COUNTRY'S URANIUM RESERVES. REPORTEDLY, THE GOT WISHES TO BE IN A POSITION TO START PRODUCING LOW-COST URANIUM AT A RATE OF APPROXIMATELY 100 TONS U3O8 PER YEAR BY 1980 AND TO HAVE SUFFICIENT LOW-COAST RESERVES BY 1980 TO ENSURE CONTINUOUS PRODUCTION OVER A MEDIUM-TO LONG-TERM PERIOD.

4. GIVEN THE ABOVE, THERE APPEARS TO BE CONSIDERABLE UNCERTAINTY WITHIN THE TURKISH NUCLEAR POWER ESTABLISHMENT AS TO WHETHER A NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM BASED ON ENRICHED URANIUM-FUELED REACTORS OR ONE BASED ENTIRELY ON NATURAL URANIUM REACTORS WOULD BE MOST IN TURKEY'S LONG-RANGE INTEREST. WHILE A NATURAL URANIUM REACTOR WOULD, ON THE SURFACE, AT LEAST, PROVIDE MORE INDEPENDENT SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR THE COUNTRY, TURKEY ALSO REALIZES THAT TO ATTAIN COMPLETE SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITH A NATURAL

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URANIUM REACTOR, SUCH AS CANDU, WOULD REQUIRE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EXPENSIVE HEAVY-WATER PRODUCTION PLANT.

5. EMB IS UNABLE TO ESTIMATE THE DEGREE OF MILITARY INPUT INTO THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE SELECTION OF A NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM FRO TURKEY. LAST FEBRUARY THE THEN MINISTER OF DEFENSE SANCAR AND THE THEN PRIME MINISTER IRMAK BOTH ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY THAT TURKEY PLANNED TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR

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REACTOS AND, IF NATIONAL DEFENSE INTERESTS REQUIRED IT, THE ATOM BOMB AS WELL. IRMAK ADDED THAT TURKEY WOULD NOT RATIFY THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY. ABOVE STATEMENTS MAY POSSIBLY BE CONSIDERED BARGAINING COUNTERS AGAINST THE U.S. ARMS EMBARGO OR FRUSTRATION OVER THE MILITARY AID CUTOFF RATHER THAN THE ARTICULATION OF A WELL-THOUGHT OUT POLICY. IN ANY CASE, BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO START VIRTUALLY FROM SCRATCH, TURKEY WOULD NEED AT LEAST A DECADE, EVEN WITH FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, TO CREATE THE CAPABILITY NECESSARY FOR THE PRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

6. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT, GIVEN THE PRELIMINARY STAGE OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANNING IN TURKEY, CENTO MEETINGS OF NUCLEAR POWER EXPERTS PROVIDE AN IDEAL OPPORTUNITY FOR AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION VALUABLE TO TURKISH LONG-RANGE DECISION-MAKING. IN ADDITION, CENTO MIGHT PROVIDE AN EVENTUAL VEHICLE FOR TURKEY AND PAKISTAN TO COOPERATE WITH IRAN IN THE ESTABLISHMENT IN IRAN OF A MULTINATIONAL FACILITY FOR PLUTONIUM REPROCESSING. FURTHERMORE, A MULTINATIONAL EFFORT WITHIN A CENTO CONTEXT, OR A BROADER REGIONAL AREA, MIGHT HAVE THE ADDED ADVANTAGE OF MOVING TURKEY AWAY FROM NATURAL URANIUN, HEAVY-WATER NUCLEAR POWER SYSTEM TOWARD THE LIGHT-WATER REACTOR SYSTEMS FAVORED BY THE UNITED STATES. BERGUS UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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